



68 PAGES OF TWISTED TALES OF TERROR!

NIGHTMARE



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60¢
JUNE
1971

47364

**PHANTOM
OF THE
ROCK
ERA!**



**SATAN'S
COFFIN!**

**HORROR on the
CHAPEL WALL!
HAG OF THE BASKET!**

**A LIVING
DEATH!**



PHANTOM OF ROCK ERA PG 4



MAD MIND DOCTOR PG 22



HORROR ON THE WALL PG 56

NIGHTMARE

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HAG OF THE BASKET PG 29



A LIVING DEATH PG 46



SATAN'S COFFIN PG 12

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PHANTOM OF THE ROCK ERA



THIS EVENING STAR, THEY KNEW, WOULD SOON ECLIPSE ALL OTHER ROCK SUPER-STARS. HE WAS MAGNETISM... AN ANIMAL FURY MATCHED WITH A COMPELLING AURA OF EVIL AND SELF-DESTRUCTION AND AN ANTI-SEXUALITY WHICH HIP GIRLS FOUND ALLURING.

MY LOVE IS LIKE A BLOODRED ROSE, WILTING IN THE GARDEN...

SOON SHE WILL BE JUST LIKE ME... THEN WILL BE OUR WEDDING!

THE CROWD AT COWBOY BOB'S BAR AND DISCO STARED ON, JOYFULLY AGHAST: WITNESSING A PHENOMENON! THE DEBUT OF A NEW ROCK TALENT... A PERSONALITY TO MESMERIZE THEM WITH HIS EMPTY, WAILING VOICE, HAUNTED LYRICS, POSSESSED MOVEMENTS...



HIS MUSIC FRENZIED THEM... SET THEM WILD! EACH GIRL GYRATED AS IF BEING HELD BY A DEMON... LOST IN GROTESQUE ECSTASY! ALL, BUT ONE...

LALA LOVE, THIS ONE IS YOUR MARK!



HMM... JUST YO-KEL CHICKS... NO GROUPIES IN SIGHT!

THE RUBES HERE IN JINXON CITY, TEXAS AREN'T REALLY HIP TO THIS GUY YET!



THIS GUY WILL BE RICH SOMEDAY SOON... SURE THING!

BETTER DO A ZSA-ZSA, FAST,

AND LATCH ONTO HIM BEFORE SOMEONE ELSE DOES!



...AND COLLECT A FORTUNE IN ALIMONY WHEN HE'S FAMOUS!

THE RENT-A-COP TOLD ME HE'S HIS OWN MANAGER, SO, OPEN SEASON!

THE DRESSING ROOM WAS CRAMPED AND MUSKY. WITH A SHRUG OF SELF-PITY THE EXOTIC FIGURE TURNED TO HER...

RODDY SKEANE?

I JUST SAW YOUR PERF! HEAVY! YOU WERE JUST...

WHAT DO YOU WANT, LITTLE GIRL, MY MONEY OR MY LIFE?



HE'S ON TO ME! SLOW AND EASY, NOW... PLAY "HURT..."

I... I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR...

Y... YOU DON'T WANT ME HERE?



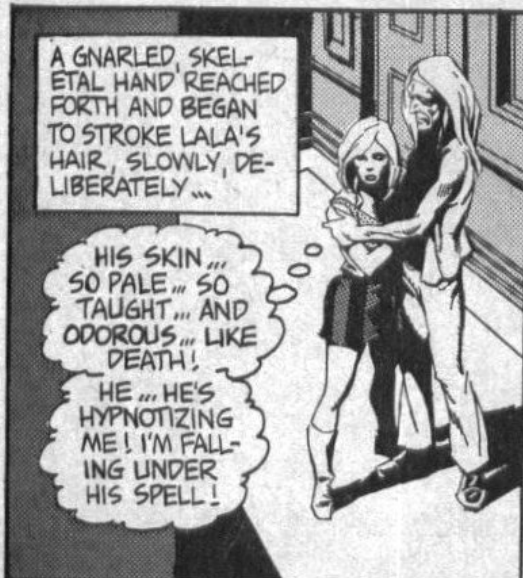
WAIT! DON'T GO! I... I'M SORRY FOR BEING RUDE!

THE "PITY THE POOR MONSTER" BIT... SUCH CLICHE!



HIS EYES! SO DEAD... DARK... DISTANT... AS IF...

I'VE BEEN WAITING SO LONG FOR SOMEONE LIKE YOU TO WALK IN...



A GNARLED, SKELETAL HAND REACHED FORTH AND BEGAN TO STROKE LALA'S HAIR, SLOWLY, DELIBERATELY...

HIS SKIN... SO PALE... SO TAUGHT... AND ODOROUS... LIKE DEATH!

HE... HE'S HYPNOTIZING ME! I'M FALLING UNDER HIS SPELL!



YOU REALLY WANT ME? OF ALL PEOPLE, ME?

YES... I WANT SOMEONE AS SHY AND SPIRITUALLY BEAUTIFUL AS YOU...





AAHA!
THERE'S SOME
DIPPY LITTLE
BROAD TRYING
TO CUT IN ON
MY TERRITORY!



SORRY,
FELLOW GOLD
DIGGER, BUT A
GIRL MUST PRO-
TECT HER IN-
VESTMENTS!

SSSSSMACK!

GUNGHHG!



SURPRISE,
DARLING... OUR
OWN QUAIN'T
LOVE NEST!

WONDERFUL,
LOVER! WHEN
DO WE GET MAR-
RIED?

SOON, I
HOPE, BEFORE
RIGOR MORTIS
SETS IN!



A ROOM WITH A
VIEW OF **SAN FRAN-
CISCO** BAY! PER-
FECT FOR A HON-
EYMOON! WE'LL
MARRY IN A WEEK,
AFTER I INTRO-
DUCE YOU TO
MY GROUP...

I'D LIKE YOU
TO SING WITH
US!

UH-OH...
COMPLI-
CATIONS!



YES... YES... LET
ME TAKE THAT DOWN...
**POP-ROCK MER-
CHANDISING, LTD.**
WHEN? THIS AFTER-
NOON? YES, WE'LL
BE THERE.

HMM...
JAQUES
BEER,
JEWELER...
WEDDING
RINGS OUR
SPECIALTY...



THAT AFTERNOON,
AFTER A SHORT
VISIT TO THE
JEWELERS...

RODDY? LALA?
PLEEZZTA MEETCHA!
MY HANDLE'S JOE
SMITH!

LALA HERE TIPPED
ME ABOUT YOU
FELLA! MY FIRM
CAN MAKE YOU
A SUPER-
GROOVY
SUCCESS!

HOW DO YOU
DO, JOE?



THE BOYS IN THE DISPLAY DEPARTMENT WORKED ALL DAY ON THIS YESTERDAY... HERE'S THE LINEUP... RODDY SKEANE POSTERS, MODEL KITS, BALLOONS, BUBBLE GUM CARDS! MONSTER COMIC BOOKS WITH YOU AS HOST...

YOU'LL BE A HIT ON BOTH SIDES OF THE GENERATION GAP!



WE CAN EVEN GET A **GROUP** FOR YOU!!

A WEREWOLF WITH SIDEBURNS! A DAY-GLO VAMPIRE!

LET ME HANDLE THIS AND YOU'LL MAKE A FORTUNE.



HOW DOES A FACE WHICH LOOKS LIKE A **SKULL REGISTER HEART-BREAK... SHAME... EMBARRASSED DISSAPPOINTMENT ?!**

MONSTER MASKS! RUBBER HANDS! SKULL CANDY...

I... I ALREADY HAVE MY OWN GROUP, MR. SMITH...



WELL, WE'LL MEET AGAIN NEXT WEEK WITH YOUR, UH... FRIENDS...

LATER, MR. SMITH!



THEY WALKED PAST FILES OF SAN FRANCISCO'S "GINGERBREAD" HOUSES, A POUTING GIRL AND A SHATTERED SKELETON-MAN...

I THINK HIS IDEAS WILL MAKE YOU **RICH** RODDY!

YES, BUT BY ADVERTISING MY **UGLINESS**?



YOU'RE NOT **REALLY** UGLY, RODDY...

NO... YOU'RE UGLY IN AN **UNREAL** WAY.



THIS IS WHERE MY GROUP LIVES, LALA!

A **MAUSOLEUM**?! WHAT A GIMMICK!



I NEVER DID TELL YOU HOW I CAME TO LOOK LIKE THIS, DID I?

I NEVER CARED TO FIND OUT!

NO, YOU DIDN'T, RODDY...



NOW DOWN ONE MORE FLIGHT OF STAIRS, TO THE **CRYPTS!**

RODDY, I HEAR STRANGE, EERIE MUSIC WAVING UP FROM BELOW... IS THAT YOUR GROUP?!



AND THEN, LALA LOVE SAW WHAT SHE WOULD EVER REMEMBER TILL THE **END OF TIME!** A GRO-
TESQUE, GYRAT-
ING SPECTACLE...
THE UNDEAD
MUSIC SHRIEKED,
THE DANCERS
WRITHED SPAS-
MODICALLY...

ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MY GROUP, LALA... THE **DECREPIT CHORD!**

STOP PLAYING, FELLAS!

HEY! RODDY'S BACK AMONG THE **UNLIVING!**



LALA, LET ME INTRODUCE MY GROUP, AND THEIR GROUP-
IES...!

JASON JONES: DRUMS... MICKEY MORTON: BASS... JEFF MINOX ON RHYTHM GUITAR,

AND MARY, MIMI AND GAYLE!





SHOOT-OUT AT SATAN'S COFFIN

ONE OF YOUSE MUGS IS
A CHEATIN' **RENEGADE!** I
AIN'T WON A POT **ALL YEAR!**

I THINK SHE'S
VERY *PICTURESQUE*.



HOW!

SUNNYSIDE UP. WHATCHA WANNA DO TODAY, HOLLY? LOLL AROUND THE POOL? BADMINTON?

HECK, KEITH. WE CAN DO THAT BACK HOME IN NEW YORK! LET'S RIDE INTO THE DESERT. IT LOOKED LOVELY LAST NIGHT.

OUCH! I'M STILL SORE FROM YESTERDAY! I'M NOT USED TO BEING IN THE SADDLE YET!

AS A RIDER YOU'RE A GOOD COMPUTER PROGRAMMER, BUT I LOVE YOU ANYWAY!

DON'T KNOCK IT! I CAN EARN UP TO \$15,000 PER YEAR, OR MORE!



NO MEAN POKE NOSE IN PALEFACE BUSINESS, BUT OLD PRINCESS MOONBEAM ADVISE YOU **NOT** RIDE INTO DESERT. **STAY** ON RANCH TRAILS.

I AGREE. SCIENTIFICALLY ORIENTED, I HAVE A GREAT SENSE OF DIRECTION, BUT THE DESERT IS VAST!

MANY MEN **LOST** IN THAT DESERT. SENSE OF DIRECTION **NO HELP**. DESERT HEAP BAD MAGIC!

WHY, HOWEVER DO YOU **MEAN**, PRINCESS MOONBEAM?



LANDS AS FAR AS EYE CAN SEE ONCE BELONG MOLEVI TRIBE. WHITE MAN COME, DRIVE MOLEVI AWAY TO **STARVE** OR BE **KILLED** BY WARRIOR TRIBES. MY PEOPLE LEAVE **CURSE** ON DESERT. MANY WHITE EYES GO FORTH, NEVER TO RETURN.



HA! HA! METHINKS PRINCESS MOONBEAM IS GIVING US THE BIT -- **MOST** TOURISTS EAT THAT STUFF UP!

PRINCESS MOONBEAM SPEAK WITH **STRAIGHT** TONGUE. I KNOW **TRUTH**, FOR I AM **LAST OF MOLEVIS**.

I FIND THE LEGEND **THRILLING**! NOW I **MUST** SEE THE DESERT. AND I DON'T WANT ANY RANCH GUIDE ALONG TO SPOIL THE **SUSPENSE**!



IF BLOND SQUAW **INSIST**, PRINCESS MOONBEAM CAN OFFER THIS **AMULET** TO **WARD OFF EVIL**.

I **KNEW** THERE WAS AN **ANGLE**! HOW ABOUT SOME **GRUB**? AND **NOW**, IF YOU DON'T MIND!

OH, HOW LOVELY!



I'LL CHANGE INTO TRUNKS WHILE YOU FINISH YOUR COFFEE, MEET YOU BY THE DIVING BOARD.

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SO **RUDE** TO PRINCESS MOONBEAM, KEITH,

I'M AS CONCERNED AS THE NEXT GUY ABOUT THE INDIAN'S **PLIGHT**, HONEY, BUT KEITH HANDSEN IS NOBODY'S **SUCKER**. AND THERE'LL BE **NO** RIDING OFF INTO THE SUNSET. THERE'S A **SQUARE DANCE** TONIGHT.

IT'S PROBABLY IN YOUR HONOR!



PRINCESS MOONBEAM
HOPE SHE NOT CAUSE
SQUABBLE FOR PALE-
FACE SQUAW.

OH, DON'T MIND KEITH. HE'S A COMPUTER PROGRAMMER,
BUT HE MEANS WELL. I WRITE POETRY, SO I'M MORE
ROMANTIC. TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOUR AMULET.

THUNDERBIRD IS MOTHER SYMBOL TO
MY PEOPLE. **PROTECTS** HER YOUNG.
WHEN IN **DANGER** TWIRL AMULET
AND SAY MAGIC WORDS 'GAWANNA-
WAY, GAWANNA-WAY.

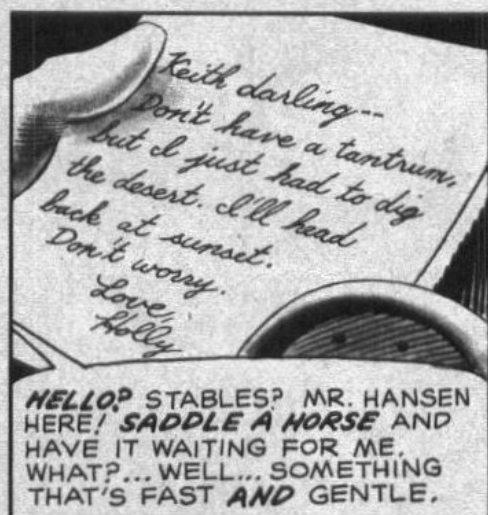


DON'T TELL MY HUSBAND, BUT
I WANT IT. HOW MUCH, PRINCESS?

NOT FOR SALE. ONLY
GOOD CAN **BUY GOOD**.
IF YOU MUST VISIT
LAND OF THE LOST,
I MAKE YOU **GIFT**. YOU
REPAY BY **GOOD DEED**
OF OWN TO **OTHERS**.



WHAT'S **KEEPING HOLLY**? HOW
LONG DOES IT TAKE TO PUT ON
A BIKINI? I'D BETTER **CHECK**
OUR CABANA.



HELLO? STABLES? MR. HANSEN
HERE! **SADDLE A HORSE** AND
HAVE IT WAITING FOR ME.
WHAT?... WELL... SOMETHING
THAT'S **FAST AND GENTLE**.



DESPITE THE **BEAUTY** OF THE **SUNSET**, THIS PLACE IS
OPPRESSIVE, MAN, IS HOLLY GONNA GET A PIECE OF MY
MIND! I **LOST** HER **TRAIL** HOURS AGO, BUT SHE **MUST'VE**
HEADED FOR THOSE MESAS. I'VE **GOT** TO FIND HER BEFORE
DARK. -- **WAIT!** IS THAT **SMOKE** I SEE?



THAT SMOKE WAS SOMEWHERE AROUND HERE, HOLLY! HOL-LY! HOL-LEEE!

KEITH! RUN AWAY!

WHA--? WHY SHE'S JUST OVER THE RIDGE! LET'S GO, HORSE!



THAT'S A **SHOTGUN** AT YOUR HAID, DUDE. FORGIT YORE HOSS. JUST **GRAB AIR** AND WALK AHEAD REAL EASY.

WHA--!



HOLLY! WHAT THE DEVIL--?

OH KEITH! IF ONLY I'D OBEYED YOU...

WAL, NOW! WATCHA GOT, **HANK--** ANOTHER CLAIM-JUMPER?

YEP, NOT AS **PURTY** AS **THAT ONE**, THOUGH, SETH!

CLAIM JUMPERS? YOU'RE **NUTS!** CUT MY WIFE **FREE!**

YA WOULDN'T BE THE **FIRST** DUDE TO **HORN** IN SINCE WE LEARNED THAT THE ABANDONED GOLD **MINE** OVER YONDER IS LOADED WITH **YOU-RANIUM!**



HEH! HEH! **EVER'BODY** WANTS TO BE A PROSPECTOR. **YOU'LL** GIT A CHANCE TO DO SOME **DIGGING**, DUDE. LE'S SHOW HIM THE MINE, HANK.

SQUAW GIRL AIN'T HAD A **CHANCE** TO SEE IT YET EITHER. FETCH HER.



THEY'RE **CRAZY**, KEITH! THAT **SEEDY-LOOKING** BEARDED MAN IN THE FADED DENIM CLOTHES SAYS THEY'RE GOING TO **KEEP ME** AS THEIR SQUAW!

OVER MY DEAD BODY!

IT JEST COULD WORK WORK OUT THAT WAY, DUDE!

YOU'LL SEE FOR YORESELF IN A MINUTE.

WHAT ARE THOSE TERRIBLE SOUNDS?



APPEARS LIKE OUR **WATCH-DOG**, REX, CAUGHT HISSELF A MINER TRYING TO **ESCAPE**.

OH, GOD-- IT'S A **MONSTER!** A **PREHISTORIC MONSTER!**

YE GODS! THOSE **MINERS** ARE NO **BEAUTIES** EITHER!

THE POOR SOULS ARE **RADIATION MUTANTS!** THEY MUST BE THE **LOST PEOPLE** PRINCESS MOONBEAM SPOKE OF!

REX WAS JUST A LITTLE OLD **GILA MONSTER LIZARD** LIKE THOUSANDS IN THE DESERT WHEN WE MADE HIM A **PET**. THE **YOU-RANIUM RADIATION** MADE HIM GROW. IT DOES **OTHER** THINGS TO **FOLKS**. THAT'S WHY SETH AND ME DON'T GO **BEYOND** THE BARBED WIRE. OUR MINERS. PILE THE DAY'S TAKE IN THESE LEAD CASES. **WE** TAKE IT FROM THAR. **HAW!**

YA GOTTA **CHOICE**, DUDE. **WORK** THE MINES LIKE THE **OTHERS**, OR BE **REX BREAKFAST**.

YOU **FIENDS**.

YA GOT TILL **DAWN** T' DECIDE. REX WON'T BE **HONGRY** 'FORE THEN.

KEITH, ARE THEY **ASLEEP?**

FROM THEIR **SNORES** I **COMPUTE** THAT THEY ARE, WHY?

DON'T **TEASE**, DARLING. I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN **BIDING** YOUR TIME, I, TOO, NOTICED THAT THEY FAILED TO **CONFISCATE** YOUR **SPURS**.

ER...YES. I WAS JUST GOING TO SUGGEST WE **SAW** THE **ROPES** AGAINST THE **ROWELS** OF MY **SPURS**.



WHAT **LUCK-- FINDING** HIM IN THE DARK!

QUICK, HOLLY! UP BEHIND ME! **GIDDYAP!**

SETH! THEY'RE GITTIN' AWAY!



DON'T WASTE **AMMO**, HANK...

BLAM!



...THEY ONLY GOT ONE **TIED** HOSS AND NO **WATER**. WE'LL GIT SOME **SHUTEYE** AND **OVER-TAKE** 'EM BY **NOON** TOMORROW.





RIGHT, DUDE! ONE MOVE AND I **BLAST** YOU IN YOUR TRACKS.

YOU, C'MERE! MISS ME, SQUAW GIRL?

KEITH! HELP!



GET YOUR HANDS OFF-- **UGH!**

DON'T WASTE BUCKSHOT HANK. BASH HIS HAID IN.



THE **AMULET!** WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF IT **BEFORE?**



GAWANNA-WAY! GAWANNA-WAY!

SAY! WHAT'S GOING ON? WHERE'D **THEM** FELLERS COME FROM?

GIVE 'EM **BOTH BARRELS**, HANK! THERE'S **ONLY FOUR** OF 'EM!

IT APPEARS OUR GAME IS **FINALLY** ENDED, GENTLEMEN. HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO **PROVE** THE PROWESS OF WHICH YOU'VE SO OFTEN **BOASTED**.

I RECKON!

WHY, SHORE.

THESE MUGS AIN'T GOTTA **CHANCE** AGAINST MY CRACKIN' COLT!



YOU'NS KIN GIT UP NOW MA'AM, THOSE *SIDEWINDERS* ARE *GONERS*. AND WE DON'T AIM TO HARM *YOU*.



YOU INTEND US NO *HARM*?

HOW CAN WE EVER *THANK* YOU-- WHATEVER OR... *WHOEVER* YOU ARE?



'TIS *WE* WHO MUST THANK *YOU*, MADAME. IN *LIFE* WE WERE *WICKED* MEN. OUR SOULS WERE *DOOMED* TO REMAIN IN *SATAN'S COFFIN* UNTIL WE PERFORMED A DEED THAT WOULD *REDEEM* US. *THOSE* VERMIN WILL BE TAKING OUR PLACE *NOW*. YOU'VE ENABLED US TO GO TO *ETERNAL REST*. THANK YOU AND *FAREWELL*.



I CAN'T **BELIEVE** IT, KEITH! IT ALL SEEMS LIKE A **DREAM**!

WE'LL **KNOW** WHETHER WE DREAMED IT, WHEN WE GET BACK TO THE MINE. YOU GOT ANY **IDEA** WHAT THOSE DIGGINGS ARE **WORTH**?

A LOT, I **GUESS**. THOSE POOR DEVILS

A LOT MORE THAN **\$15,000** A YEAR!



IT WAS **NO DREAM**, BABY! **ATTABOY**, REX, KEEP 'EM **HOPPING**! HEY, YOU **MEATHEADED MUTANTS**, GET A MOVE ON! FROM NOW ON WE'RE **DOUBLING** THE DAILY **QUOTA**!

KEITH! WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!

WE'RE TAKING OVER, HOLLY! **RICH**! YACHTS, JEWELS, SERVANTS! I CAN HANDLE REX AS WELL AS THOSE DUMB SOURDOUGHS-- AS LONG AS HE DOESN'T GO **HUNGRY**.

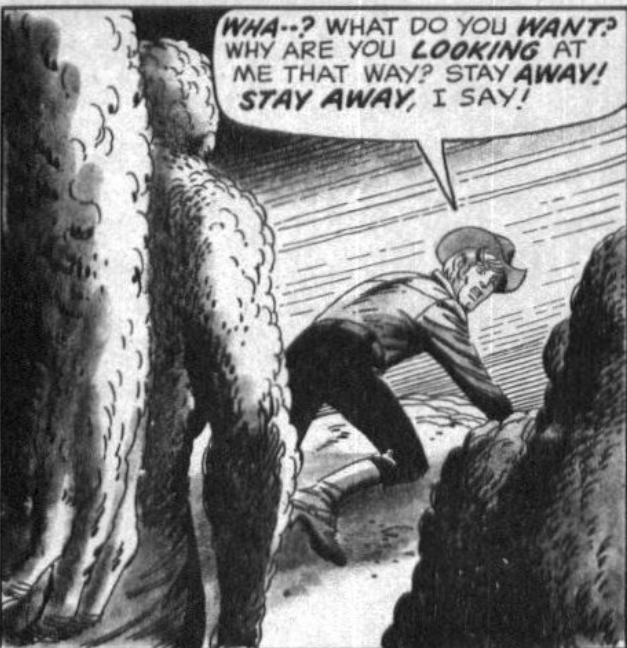
TIME THE SLAVES ARE ALL **EATEN**, WE'LL HAVE **MORE** THAN WE CAN **EVER** SPEND!



NO! I WON'T **LET** YOU! YOU'VE GONE **MAD**, KEITH. ALL I WANT IS MY **LOVABLE** COMPUTER PROGRAMMER BACK! I DON'T NEED **WEALTH**!

HOLLY, COME **BACK**! WHAT ARE YOU DOING, YOU FOOL?

I'M **FREEING** THE SLAVES! COME, YOU POOR SOULS! WHEN I PULL THE FENCE DOWN, **RUN**!



POWER DOES CORRUPT, AND ABSOLUTE POWER DOES CORRUPT ABSOLUTELY. EVERYONE KNOWS THIS. STILL, WE WHO TURN OUR MIGHTY CITIES INTO LABYRINTHS OF PRIVILEGE AND DARKNESS SOMETIMES GIVE OVER THE POWER OF OUR MINDS TO FIRST MADNESS, AND THEN TO--

THE MAD MIND DOCTOR!



THE METHODICAL TIP-TAPPING OF THE RECEPTIONIST'S ELECTRICAL TYPEWRITER CEASED AS THE INNER-OFFICE DOOR CREAKED...

I AM NOT A PSYCOPATH.
I AM NOT A PSYCOPATH.
I--

VERY GOOD,
MRS. MORTON!
WE'LL SEE
EACH OTHER
IN ONE
WEEK.

UH-MRS. MORTON, WAIT A
MOMENT... THAT WILL BE
FIFTY-FIVE DOLLARS
FOR THE HOUR...

YOU CAN VISIT
DR. STREICHMAN,
NOW, MR. KAENE...

YES, WE
ALWAYS
ACCEPT
CHECKS...

UH, GO
RIGHT IN,
MR. KAENE...



MY PROBLEM, DOCTOR--
IS THAT MORE AND MORE
OFTEN... PARTICULARLY
WHEN THE MOON IS OUT--

I FEEL A CHANGE
COME OVER ME...
AS IF MY **SOUL**
DIED... AS IF...

I FEEL I'M
TURNING SLOWLY
INTO A
WEREWOLF...





YOU ARE JUST A SMALL MAN TRYING TO COMPENSATE FOR YOUR FAULT! YOU'RE NOT A WEREWOLF! SO YOU FANTASIZE YOURSELF TO BE A MIGHTY MONSTER!

THIS WEREWOLF FANTASY OF YOURS IS A PSYCHOLOGICAL SIN!



AAOOOHH! AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SINS MUST BE PUNISHED!

THAT IS WHY MY THERAPY IS NECESSARILY SO EXTREME!



COWARDS FEAR THE VERY NAME, "STREICHIAN THERAPY!"

FOR THEY FEAR THE PUNISHMENT THEY SO MUCH DESERVE!

YOU WERE WISE IN COMING TO ME SO SOON!



YOU MUST COME BACK NEXT MONDAY FOR ANOTHER SESSION--

REMEMBER, MR. KAENE--YOU ARE NOT A WEREWOLF! YOU ARE NOT A WEREWOLF!



YES...\$55, MR. KAENE...

YOU MAY GO IN NOW, MISS DARGOSI--

T-THANK YOU!



AH YES, MISS DARGOSI--

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO THINKS SHE MIGHT BE A VAMPIRE--

Y-YES--



MISS DARGOSI, YOU ARE WRONG!

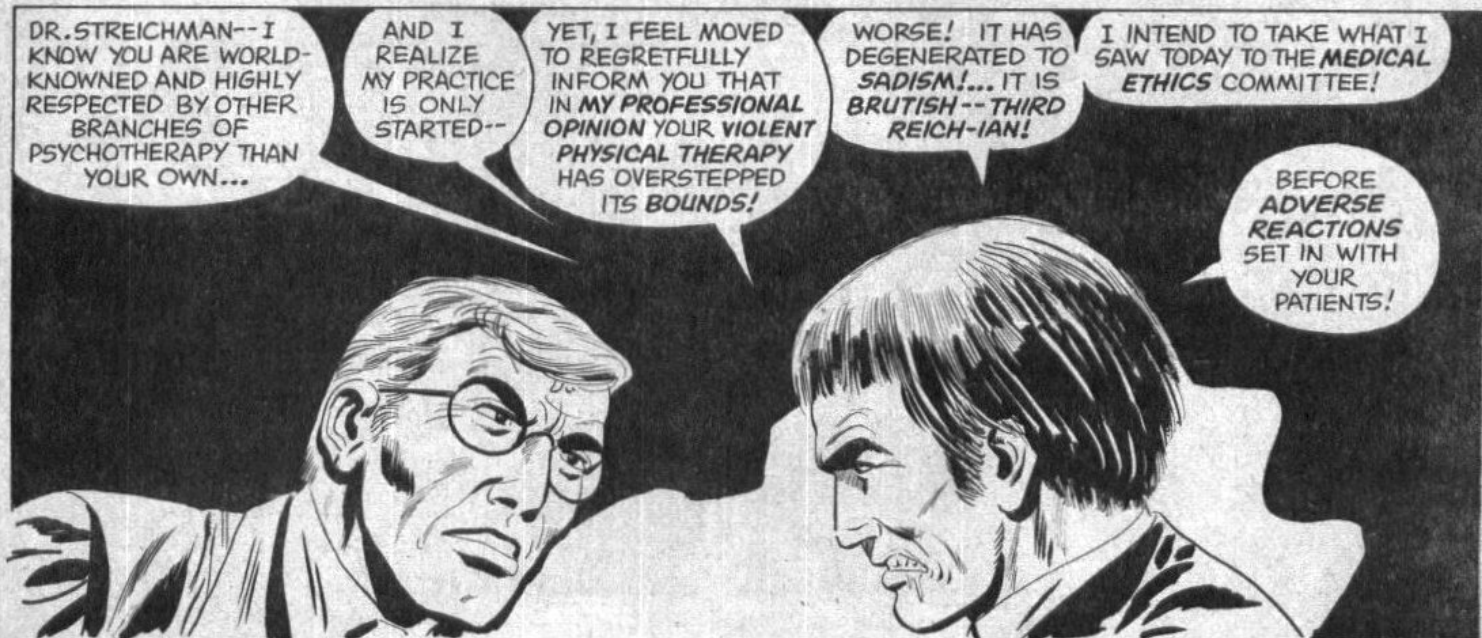
VAMPIRES CAST NO REFLECTION!

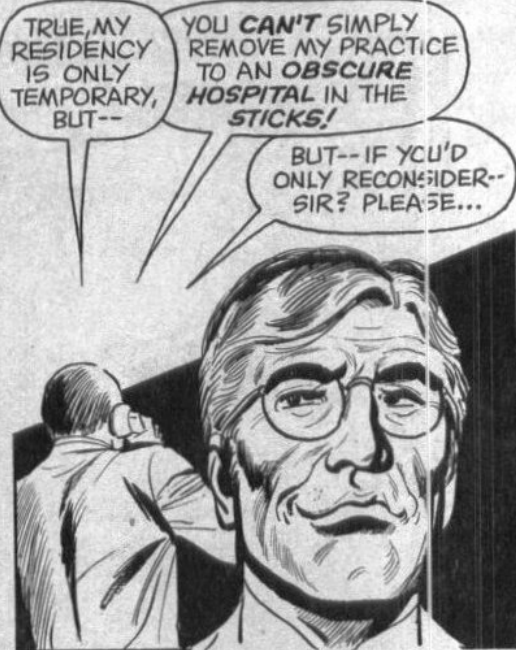
YEEEEII!



SEE! YOUR REFLECTIONS MIRRORED A THOUSAND TIMES!

YOU ARE NOT A VAMPIRE! YOU ARE NOT A VAMPIRE!







THE NEXT NIGHT FOUND DR. ADOLPH STREICHMAN AFTER OFFICE HOURS...

ODD THING, THIS CONSCIENCE OF MINE--

EACH TIME I KILL SOMEONE, I STUDY MY PATHOLOGY BOOKS THAT MUCH **HARDER!**

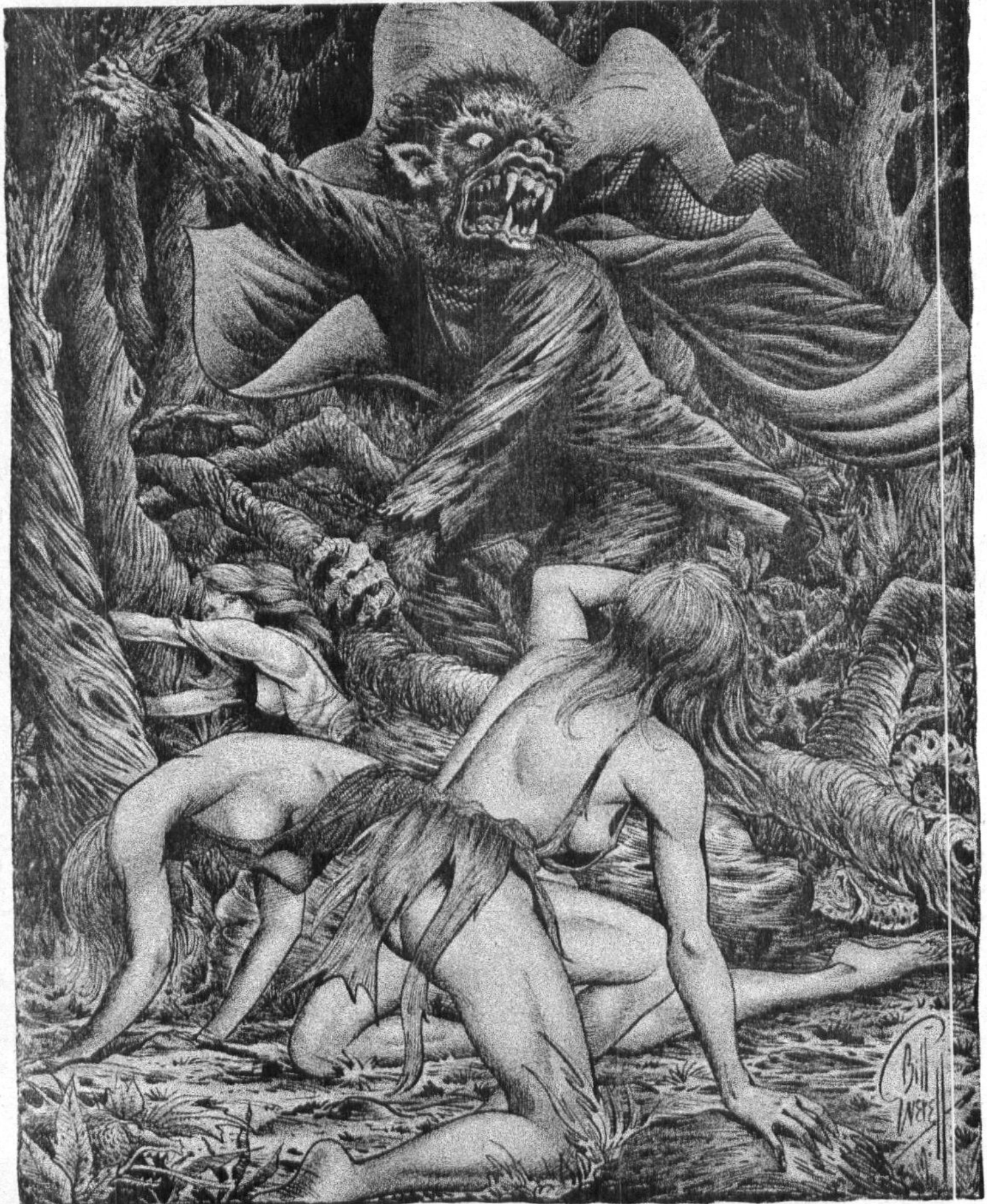


AS DARKNESS PERVADES THE STREAMLINED CAVERNS OF THE GREAT CITY, DR. ADOLPH STREICHMAN LEARNS THE **TERRIFYING LESSON** THAT HIS THERAPIES **BACKFIRED**--THAT PATIENTS, FROM **SHEER FORCE OF VENGEANCE** IMBEDDED DEEP IN THEIR HEARTS CAN BECOME THAT WHICH THEY **FEAR MOST--THE INCREDIBLE MONSTERS** HE TOLD THEM THEY WERE NOT!

The End

A NIGHTMARE PIN-UP #3

THIS UNUSUAL TREATMENT
OF A BEAUTIFULLY DONE
NIGHTMARE MASTERPIECE WAS
DONE BY THE MASTER. . . BILL EVERETT



DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH IS THE FIENDISH INFERNAL ABYSS KNOWN AS... **HELL!** ETERNALLY MAN HAS LIVED IN FEAR OF DAMNATION... THAT HIS SOUL MAY BE CAST INTO EVERLASTING TORMENT... AND ODIOUS PANDEMONIUM! OUR TALE TAKES YOU ON A PERSONALLY GUIDED TOUR OF GROTTTO OF **HELL** ITSELF... FROM WHICH NONE HAVE EVER RETURNED... SAVE FOR ONE... THE --

HAG OF THE BLOOD BASKET!

FRANCE, THE YEAR 1793... IN THE MIDST OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION... ONE OF THE GAUDIEST BLOODBATHS IN HISTORY. A REVOLUTION OF THE "PEOPLE" WHERE PREJUDICE HAS ITS REVENGE IN KIND... WHERE MEN, WOMEN AND EVEN CHILDREN OF NOBLE BIRTH, ARE DRAGGED IN RICKETY, LUMBERING CARTS AFTER A MOCK TRIAL, TO THEIR DEATHS AT THE BLACK HAND OF THE MERCILESS... **GUILLOTINE!**

THE **GUILLOTINE**... GLEAMING IN THE BLOOD DRENCHED STREETS OF PARIS, ROLL THE WRITHING HEADS OF ITS OFT-INNOCENT VICTIMS. MINDLESS, HEADLESS BUT ONLY FOR A FEW SECONDS... OFTEN THE GHASTLY DISFIGURED HEADS ROLL INTO A CRIMSON RECEPTACLE... **THE BLOODY HEAD-BASKET!**





IN THAT TIME OF
PERSONAL VENDETTA...
WHEN MEN USED THE
REVOLUTION TO KILL
THEIR PERSONAL
ENEMIES STARTS OUR
TALE...AN OLD WOMAN
IS FALSELY ACCUSED
OF BEING A ROYALIST...
IN REALITY SHE WAS
BUT A SIMPLE
PEASANT...**THE**
WOMAN WHO HELD
THE BLOOD BASKET!



WHY?

WHY AM I
HERE IN COURT? I
AM AN OLD WOMAN...
I HAVE DONE NOTHING
...I PLAY MY PART IN
THE REVOLUTION WELL
...TELL ME WHY?



REVOLTING OLD
HAG...YOUR
PRESENCE IS
AN INSULT!

THIS COURT
HAS NO PITY
ON YOU OR
YOUR VILE
KIND!

KIND?
...KIND OF
WHAT?

WHY DO
YOU INSULT
ME?

WHAT
HAVE
I EVER
DONE
WRONG?



SILENCE HAG!
DO NOT AFFRONT
JUSTICE AGAIN
WITH YOUR VILE
MOUTH...YOU HAVE
BEEN CHARGED
BY BROTHER BENET
OF CONSORTING
WITH THE ACCURSED
ARISTOCRACY...
SAY YOUR
DEFENSE!

...AND MAKE
IT BRIEF!

THAT'S **INSANITY!**
BROTHER BENET
HAS **TRUMPED UP**
HIS CHARGE...
MERELY TO GET
RID OF ME!

HE OWES ME
MUCH MONEY...
IF I'M DEAD HE
WON'T HAVE TO
PAY ME... I
SWEAR IT!



CERTAINLY NO MERCY FROM A COURT WITH POWER DEVOID OF SANITY...AND SHE IS CONDEMNED TO BE TAKEN THE FOLLOWING DAY TO THE WAITING CLUTCHES OF THE **GUILLOTINE**...MERCILESS AND CRUEL, UNHEARING AND UNCARING...A HIDEOUS LAMPOONER OF JUSTICE!

THE EXECUTIONER STANDS BEFORE THE CROWDS OF JEERING PEASANTS HAND GRASPING TAUGHT THE ROPE THAT HOLDS READY THE BLADE...THE CONQUERING STEEL SHAFT THAT SEVERS ANY MAN'S LIFE!

THE CROWDS LEAR AT THE CONVICTED WHO LUMBER TO THE PLATFORM FROM BLOOD-DRENCHED CARTS... CRY SHOUTS OF INSULT AND SING SONGS OF FREEDOM... DELIRIOUS IN ANTICIPATION OF THE MACABRE SLAUGHTER THAT AWAITS THEM!



FATE GLEAMS OMINOUSLY ABOVE AS THE OLD TOAD HAG WHIMPERS IN DESPAIR...LEGS GROW WEAK...HER EYES--LONG SOAKED WITH TEARS OF AGONY--ROLL, HAGGARD IN THEIR SOCKETS! AS SHE NOW FACES THE ETERNITY OF DAMNATION!



THE BLADE DROPS SUDDENLY... GUTTING THE EAR-PIERCING SCREAMS OF THE WRETCHED OLD WOMAN SPITTING HORRIBLE OBSCENITIES AT THOSE JEERING; MANY WHO CONDEMNED HER TO DEATH! IN BUT A MOMENT THE UNCANNY FRENZY IS OVER. THE HEAD ROLLS, EYES POPPING FROM THEIR SOCKETS...AND THE GUTTER WELCOMES THE GROTESQUE CADAVER WITH BLOOD-SODDEN COBBLESTONE! THE TOAD HAG LIES DEAD AND DECAPITATED! THE CROWD IS HUSHED IN A MOMENT OF PRECLIMACTIC REFLECTION...



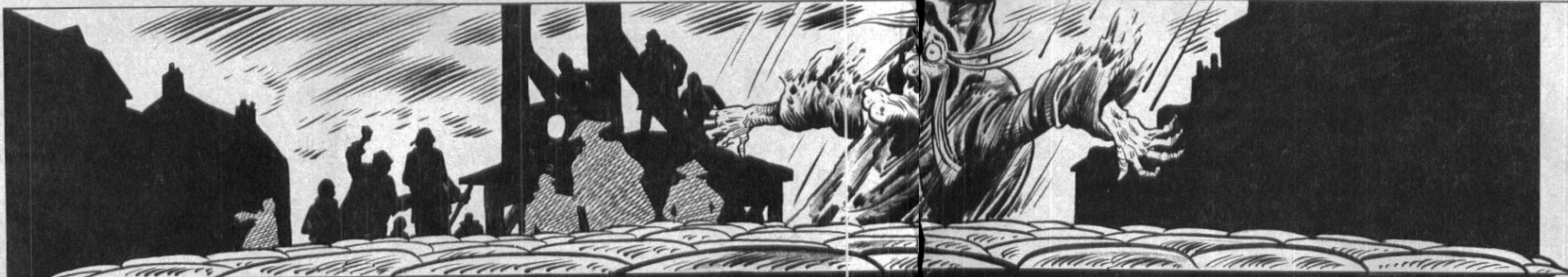
BUT DEATH COMES NOT EASILY. HER EYES REMAIN OPEN EVEN AS SHE LIES HELPLESS, IN PASSIVE AGONY AS THE FEET OF HER MURDERERS PASS HER BY...

SHE WATCHES IN TORTURE AS HER NOW LIMP AND LIFELESS FORM IS TOSSED LIKE GARBAGE FROM THE THRONE OF DEATH...AND WONDERS... PONDERES *WHY* THERE IS NOT THE NOTHINGNESS OF DEATH SHE EXPECTED...BUT A *LIFE* AFTER DEATH...THAT PERMITS HER TO SEE, TO HEAR, TO WONDER!



MISERY AND SHOCK MUDDLE TOGETHER IN THE TOAD HAG'S MIND...THE BODY (THAT WAS ONCE HERS) SHUDTERS AND GROPEs FORWARD SEARCHING...SEARCHING FOR A HEAD. A MIND THAT THINKS, EYES THAT CAN SEE! THE HANDS FIND THEIR TARGET...AND PULL THE TEAR-PULSING HEAD BACK...BACK TO THE SHOULDERS WHERE IT RIVETS ITSELF MIRACULOUSLY...AND THE MESS THAT WAS LIVING DEATH NOW BECOMES...AS ONE IN FORM...AND IN LIFE!





AND SOON YOU **SHALL** KNOW WRETCHED OLD HAG, AS YOU BEGIN YOUR **DESCENT...** YOU **SINK** INTO THE VERY **GROUND** ITSELF. YOU **GRASP** FOR SUPPORT CLUTCHING NOTHING BUT **AIR...** MEANINGLESS **AIR...** AND STILL YOU **SINK...** DOWN...DOWN...INTO THE VERY **BOWELS** OF THE EARTH!



THE EARTH **WELCOMES** YOU... CUSHIONS YOUR **DESCENT** AND CARESSES YOUR DECAYING BODY IN **MOCKERY**. YOU ARE CHOKING...AND SUFFER...AND CLUTCH YOUR THROAT **PLEADING** FOR **AIR...** FOR YOU CANNOT BREATHE...AND YET YOU CANNOT DIE!

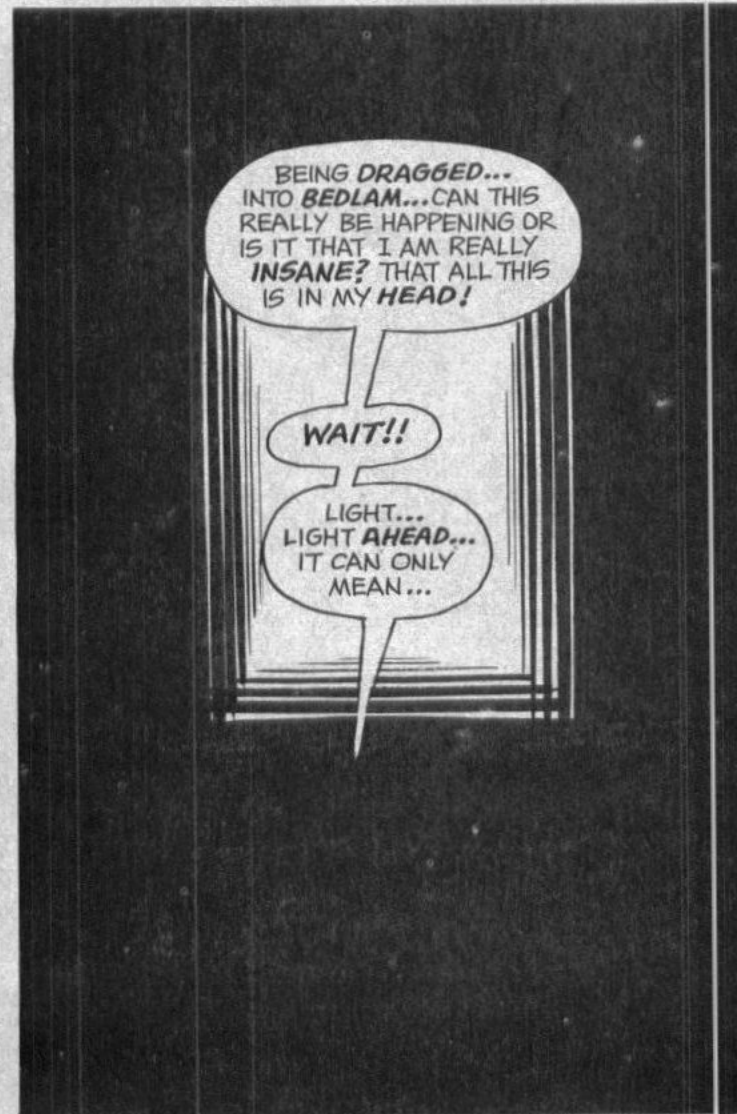


AND WHERE THE GROUND -- AND EARTH **END...** DEEP WITHIN THE WORLD'S VERY **CORE...** YOU FALL THROUGH THE NOTHINGNESS THAT SURROUNDS YOU. GREAT MONSTROUS **BATS** HOVER ABOUT AND, RUDELY AWAKENED FROM THEIR SLEEP OF AGES, CRASH BLINDLY ABOUT YOUR HELPLESS FORM NOW BATTERED AND BRUISED...



TARTARUS WELCOMES YOU...MADAM! I TRUST YOUR TRIP HAS BEEN AS UNCOMFORTABLE AS WE **INTENDED** IT BE! I AM **VOGT...** EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO HIS MAJESTY **SATHANAS!** THIS MADAME...AS YOU MAY HAVE PRESUMED... IS **HELL!**

AND WHEN YOU **DO** STOP FALLING...YOU ARE SURROUNDED BY **NOTHING!** YOU SCREAM...AND NO ONE HEARS YOU...SAVE THE INCREDIBLE NIGHT-BIRDS OF DEATH WHO STIFLE THE VERY AIR YOU NOW BREATHE...UNTIL THERE APPEARS BEFORE YOU A VILE HUNCHED DWARF...CLIRIOUS AND OBSCENE...WHO SILENCES THE LOUD CLATTERING OF WINGS AND YOUR CRIES... AND YOU LISTEN!





THE GROTTO OF HELL!
GROTESQUE--HORRID--UN-
CANNY BEYOND MORTAL
IMAGINATION...WHERE THE
DEAD DWELL IN AN ETERNITY
OF TORTURE AND ANGUISH...
WHERE FREEDOM IS
BANISHED...WHERE THE
INDIVIDUAL IS BUT LITERALLY
A NUMBER ON A CAGE...
WHERE **SATAN** RULES
WITH AN IRON FIST!



THE GROTTO OF HELL! WHERE TIME
STANDS STILL AND YET REACHES OUT
IN ALL DIRECTIONS...INTO THE DEEP
AND MISTY AGES OF YESTERDAY...AND
FAR INTO THE WAR RIDDEN UNKNOWN
S OF TOMORROW! IT IS UNBEARABLE FOR
A WOMAN SO OLD, SO FRAIL...SHE FEELS
AGONY IN THE LIFELESS HEART IN THE
LIFELESS SPIRITUAL BODY! YET SHE
CAN SAY NOTHING...**DO** NOTHING
HERE...LESS IT BE SANCTIONED BY THE
DEVIL HIMSELF!



**BUT WAIT...THERE ARE
NO PEOPLE...NO PEOPLE!
WHERE CAN THEY BE? IS
THIS NOT A CITY...OR IS IT
EXACTLY WHAT IT APPEARS
TO BE...SOME KIND OF
INCREDIBLE CRYPT OF THE
FORGOTTEN DEAD!**



**I'LL FOLLOW YOU NOWHERE UNTIL I FIND OUT MORE
...UNTIL I HAVE AN EXPLANATION! WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
...WHERE ARE ALL THE PEOPLE...TELL ME...PLEASE TELL ME!**

**IN THE GRIME
AND CAKED DUST
OF HELL ITSELF
SATAN HIMSELF
IS UNSEEN...YET
HE IS ALWAYS
PRESENT...ALWAYS
ON THE LIPS OF
EVERY DESPERATE
SOUL WHO INHABITS
THIS ISLE OF
DAMNATION! HE
IS SERVED BY
MANY ASSISTANTS
WHO, CONTEMPTABLE
EVEN TO THEIR
OWN KIND!
HIDEOUSLY DE-
FORMED DEVILISH
ASSISTANTS WHO
HAVE SWORN THEIR
ALLEGIANCE TO
HATE...TERROR...
DESPOTISM AND FEAR.
THE TOAD HAG HAS
ALREADY MET ONE
SUCH GAUNT EXCUSE
FOR HUMANITY...HE
WHO IS CALLED...
**VOGT...NOW SHE
MEETS ANOTHER...
THE HAGGARD
DRAKKOS!****



DRAKKOS... DENIZEN OF THE DEATH WORLD, EPITOME OF ABSOLUTE EVIL...LEADS THE BEWILDERED HAG TO HER **CAGE**...ONE IN THE MIDST OF **THOUSANDS** STACKED MILE HIGH LIKE SO MANY CARTONS IN A WAREHOUSE! THE EAR-PIERCING SHRIEKS AND CRIES OF HER FELLOWS DEAFENS HER... AND HER MISERY OVERTAKES THE NOW SUDDEN REALIZATION OF THE REALITY OF **DEATH**!

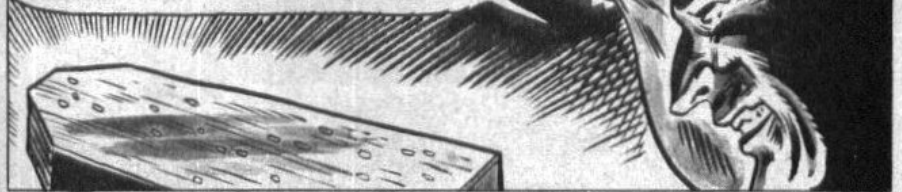


LIKE THE INFAMOUS INSTRUMENT OF MEDIEVAL TORTURE THIS UPDATED **SPIKE BOX** SERVES ITS MASTER FAR BETTER THAN ITS PREDECESSOR...FOR THIS COFFIN-- CUSHIONED FROM EVERY ANGLE BY DEEP AND BITING FOUR INCH SPIKES--IS DESIGNED TO TORTURE THE **LIVING DEAD**...THOSE WHO CANNOT PRAY FOR DEATH... THOSE WHO CAN ONLY WAIT...AND ENDURE...THE **ETERNAL AGONY**!

TIME PASSES...SLOWLY...TEARS NOW FESTER SORES IN THE OPEN CUTS IN HER FLESH... TIME HAS NO MEANING, NO SUBSTANCE...THEN SHE IS PAID A VISIT...



WELL, WOMAN...THE TIME HAS FINALLY COME FOR YOUR...AUDIENCE!



SO CONFINED HAS SHE BEEN, SO RESTRICTED IN MOVEMENT TO ONLY AN INCH HERE...AN INCH THERE...THAT SHE CAN SCARCELY MOVE! HER BONES HAVE MOLDED INTO A FIXED POSITION, HER LEGS WILL HARDLY MOVE...AND SO HER NEW FOUND FREEDOM IS NOT A BLESSING... BUT A NIGHTMARE!



COME QUICKLY...DON'T STUMBLE! THE MASTER AWAITS...AND HIS TIME IS VALUABLE! IF WE ARE NOT PROMPT WE WILL BOTH SUFFER HIS WRATH!



HERE SHE IS...MASTER! THE NEWEST ACQUISITION! HER NAME IS MADAM DU SADE!

WELCOME...WELCOME! HAS DRAKKOS SHOWN YOU OUR CHAMBER YET...HAVE YOU DECIDED WHAT YOU WANT?

I'VE BEEN SHOWN NOTHING...I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT A... CHAMBER...



AH WELL THEN...YOU HAVE A SURPRISE IN STORE FOR YOU...NOT A PLEASANT ONE I REGRET...BUT NEVERTHELESS A GENUINE FIRST RATE SURPRISE!

EVERY RESIDENT HAS A PRIVATE HELL! THE THING ONE FEARS MOST...

WITH MANY IT IS QUITE COMMON... RATS, SNAKES, EVEN SPIKES... THINGS OF THAT SORT! BUT WITH SOME...THE BRAND OF PUNISHMENT IS UNIQUE!

COME... I'LL SHOW YOU...







YOU'LL ROT, WOMAN... ROT IN ETERNITY TILL YOUR MISERABLE CARCASS SMELLS LIKE MANURE!

BUT I'M INNOCENT... I'M INNOCENT... I'VE DONE NOTHING TO DESERVE THIS... NOTHING...

YOU'LL PAY THE SUPREME PUNISHMENT ALL RIGHT... ETERNAL LONELINESS...



HE WOULDN'T LISTEN TO ME... NO ONE LISTENS TO ME HERE...

AND SO SHE IS LEFT ALONE... BUT TO ENDURE THE MOST INHUMAN PUNISHMENT OF ALL... LONELINESS AND THE BURDEN OF THE MIND!

LEFT TO ROT, HE SAYS... IN THIS MISERABLE HOLE IN THE GROUND SPAWNED OF THE DAMNATION OF SOLITUDE... I'LL GO INSANE!



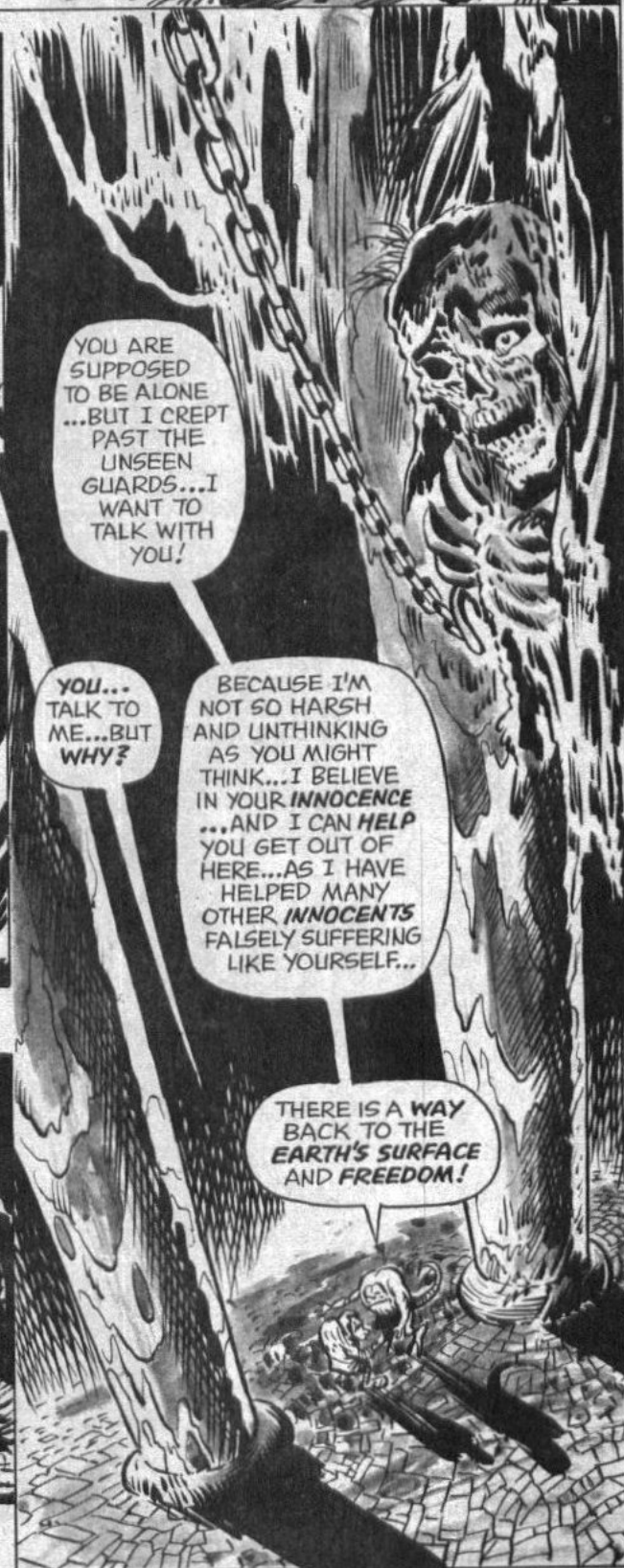
SHE DOES NOT SEE THE EYES WATCHING LIKE A SILENT DEMON IN THE DARKNESS! EYES THAT ARE CRUEL AND WITHOUT A HUMAN SHRED OF EMOTION.

WILL YOU NOW... SUCH A SHAME... BUT PERHAPS I CAN AID YOU...

VOGT... WHERE DID YOU COME FROM... I THOUGHT I WAS ALONE!



CAN IT REALLY BE THAT THE DEVIL HIMSELF CAN BE THWARTED? THAT SATAN IS A FOOL?... THAT HIS EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT IS IN LIASON WITH THE FORCES OF... GOOD?



YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE ALONE... BUT I CREEPT PAST THE UNSEEN GUARDS... I WANT TO TALK WITH YOU!

YOU... TALK TO ME... BUT WHY?

BECAUSE I'M NOT SO HARSH AND UNTHINKING AS YOU MIGHT THINK... I BELIEVE IN YOUR INNOCENCE... AND I CAN HELP YOU GET OUT OF HERE... AS I HAVE HELPED MANY OTHER INNOCENTS FALSELY SUFFERING LIKE YOURSELF...

THERE IS A WAY BACK TO THE EARTH'S SURFACE AND FREEDOM!

AT LAKE AVERNUS, IN ITALY IS A CRATER LAKE, JOINED TO THE UNDERGROUND **STYGIAN CREEK** AN INSURMOUNTABLE BARRIER TO THOSE WHO WOULD **ENTER** ...BUT NOT TO THOSE WHO WOULD **LEAVE**.

I WILL GIVE YOU **DIRECTIONS** TO REACH IT FROM HERE...BUT TO BE RE-UNITED WITH YOUR **EARTH BODY**...TO BECOME AS **ONE** AGAIN IN THE WORLD OF **PHYSICAL** BEINGS...YOU MUST KNOW THE **UNHOLY INCANTATION!**

ON THE SURFACE YOU MUST STAY '**SATAN...MASTER OF NONE...SCOURGE TO NO ONE BUT HIMSELF...**I HAVE BECOME FREED IN SOUL AND SPIRIT ...I DEMAND THE RESTITUTION OF **LIF!**' THEN YOU WILL BECOME **ONE!**

VOGT WAS **ACCURATE** IN HIS MAPPING OF HER ROUTE...IT WOULD TAKE HER **DAYS** OF TIRING TRAVEL...OF **ENDLESS** JOURNEY! BUT IT WAS WORTH IT...IT WAS **FREEDOM!**

THE SPIRITUAL BODY NEEDS NO NOURISHMENT...NO FOOD OR DRINK TO KEEP IT ALIVE...BUT EVEN SO THERE IS MORTAL SUFFERING IN THE AGONIZING ENDLESS STRUGGLE FOR THE SURVIVAL OF SANITY...THE TOAD HAG RUNS INTO THE MONSTROUS EATS AGAIN WHO SEEK AFTER RAW FLESH AND COLD UNLIVING BLOOD...

AT LAST...THE LAST BARRIER ...THE **RIVER STYX**...IF I CAN MAKE IT ACROSS WITHOUT BEING TRAPPED IN THE EVER ENCIRCLING MAELSTROM I'LL REACH THE **SURFACE...**



WHIRLPOOL MAELSTROM...
ALMOST DRAGGING ME IN
...MUST KEEP FIGHTING!



AN OPENING...
IN THE ROCK...
MUST BE...
EARTH'S
SURFACE... IF
I CAN KEEP
FIGHTING TOWARD
IT!



EARTH!...
LIGHT...
THE **SUN**
STREAMING
DOWN... IT
FEELS GOOD
TO BE ALIVE
AGAIN!

AND SO IT APPEARS THAT SATAN IS A **FOOL**... TO BE TRICKED SO EASILY BY ONE OF HIS CHARGES! THE TOAD HAG HAS REACHED THE EARTH'S SURFACE... HAS ESCAPED FROM THE VERY CORE OF THE EARTH ITSELF... AND FROM THE NOW SCOWLING SATAN AS SHE UTTERS THE WORDS THAT FORCES THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS TO FREE HER FROM HIS HOLD ON HER...



NOW FOR THE
INCANTATION...
TO BECOME A
HUMAN BEING
AGAIN...

SATAN, MASTER
OF NONE... SCOURGE
OF NO ONE BUT HIS
CONTEMPTABLE SELF...
I HAVE FOUGHT AND
FREED MYSELF IN
SOUL AND SPIRIT...
NOW I DEMAND MY
FREEDOM... RELEASE
MY SOUL AND GIVE
ME LIFE!!

AND SATAN GRINS HORRIBLE A GHASTLY SMILE FOR HIS WORK IS DONE... HIS EVIL HAS TAKEN ROOT AND FORMED INTO THE GROTESQUE SEMI-LIFE THAT ROTS IN THE EARTH-BOUND MENTAL ASYLUM KNOWN AS **BEDLAM!**



"I WARNED HER, HER CARCASS WOULD ROT UNTIL IT SMELLED LIKE **MANURE!**" SATAN DREW DEEP A BREATH OF SATISFACTION, "SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME, DID SHE VOGT... THAT **EVERYONE** HAS THEIR OWN PECULIAR BRAND OF **PRIVATE HELL!**"



"THEY NEVER BELIEVE ME." 'AYE MASTER', SPAT THE HIDEOUS DWARF TRAITOR, 'AND **VOGT** HAS AGAIN SERVED YOU WELL... LETTING HER THINK SHE WAS **ESCAPING** TO FREEDOM AND UNITY WITH HER **BODY!**"

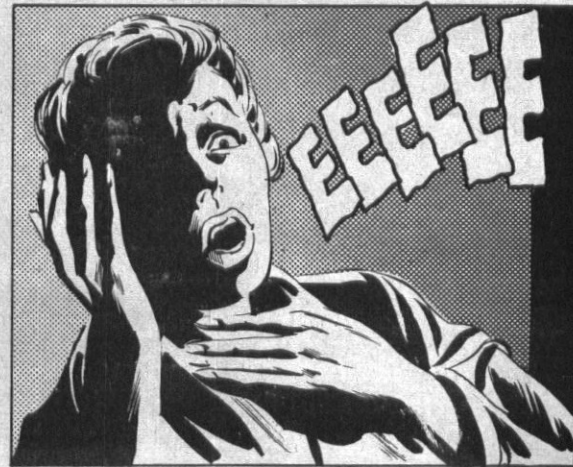
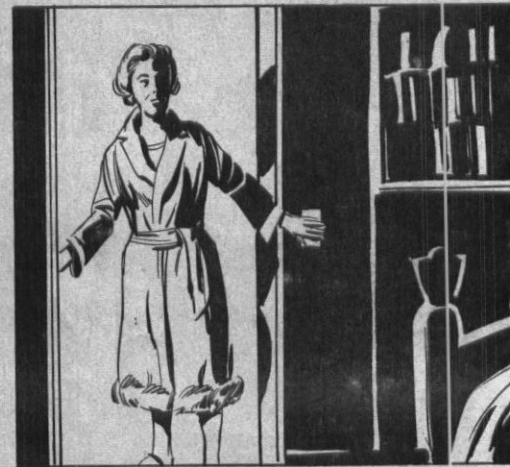
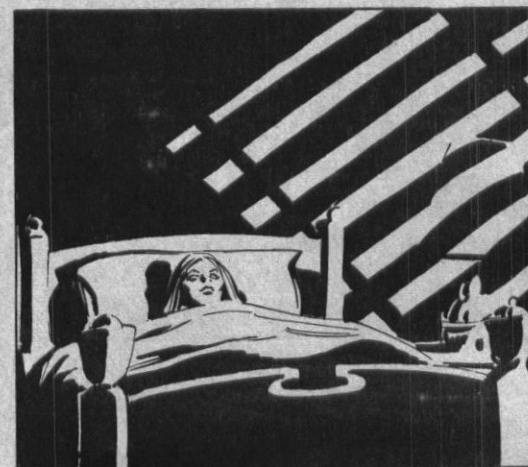
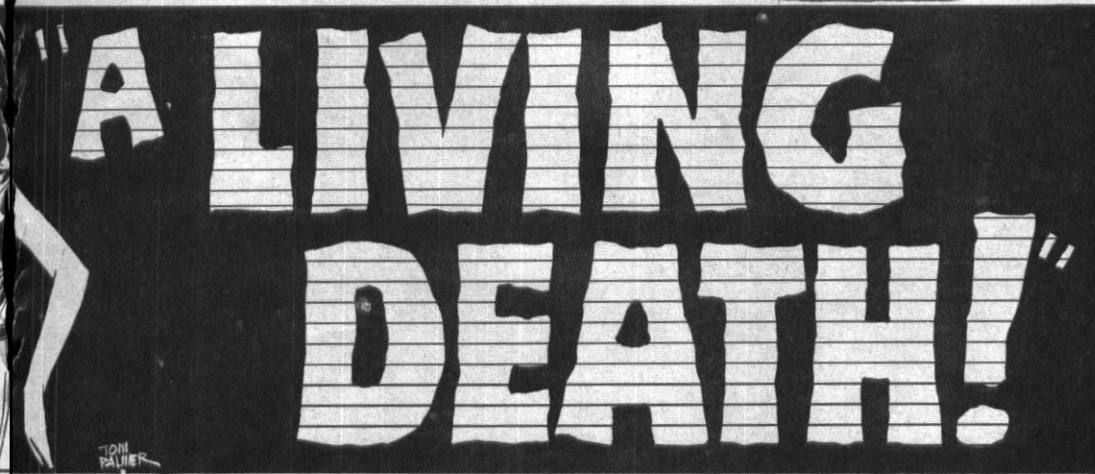
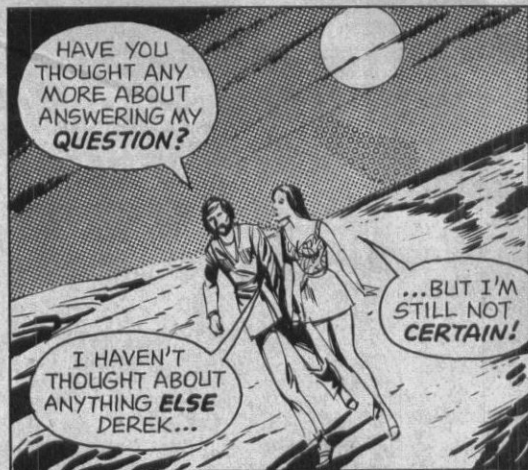


"SHE THINKS SHE IS **INNOCENT!** HAH... INNOCENT... **NO ONE** IS **INNOCENT**, VOGT... **NO ONE!** AND SO SHE SHALL SUFFER IN HER OWN **HELL...** THE HELL ON EARTH SHE CHOSE HERSELF... FOR HAD SHE NOT BEEN SO INCREDIBLY **STUPID** SHE WOULD HAVE **REMEMBERED** THAT HER BODY COULD NOT HAVE BEEN RE-UNITED WITH HER HEAD... THAT THE GUILLOTINED HEADS ARE CHOPPED UP... AND USED AS **DOG MEAT!**"



THE END

AND SATAN, BOWING LOW HIS GRAY DISSIMULATION, DISAPPEARED! THE TOAD HAG **LIVES...** FOR EVEN AS **SATAN** HAS HIS VILE BEDLAM AFTER THE GRAVE... WE ON EARTH-SIDE HAVE OUR **OWN** BEDLAM... THE ASYLUM FOR THE INCURABLY **INSANE!** AND IS THERE MAN ALIVE WHO WOULD DARE TO QUESTION THAT THE NOTORIOUS TOAD HAG OF **PARIS DU COMITÉ REFORME** IS CURABLE... FOR THE WRITHING IDIOT CHAINED TO BEDLAM IS HEADLESS... AND DECAPITATION IS INCURABLE!





AND SO WE COMMIT **LAUREN BARKER** TO THE SOIL. ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST! TAKE HER INTO THY **KINGDOM**, OH, LORD, THAT SHE MIGHT KNOW GREATER PEACE THAN SHE'S KNOWN ON EARTH!

IT WAS THAT **HIPPIE** SHE WAS GOING OUT WITH! **HE'S** RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS!

AND IF I GET MY **HANDS** ON HIM...SO HELP ME I'LL **KILL** HIM!



THE **FOOLS!** IF ONLY THEY KNEW THE **TRUTH!**

...THEY COULD TRULY **REJOICE** BECAUSE THEIR DAUGHTER'S LIFE IS ONLY **BEGINNING** RATHER THAN **ENDING!**



OH, **JOSEPH!**

IT'S HIM! WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?

HEY, YOU! HOLD ON THERE! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU!

THEY'VE **SPOTTED** ME! HAVE TO **SPLIT** CAN'T CHANCE THEM GETTING **SUSPICIOUS!**

...AMEN!



LIEUTENANT BARKER! WE WANT TO ASK YOU SOME **QUESTIONS!**

COME ON, LIEUTENANT! GIVE US A **BREAK!**

GET OUT OF MY WAY! I HAVE TO **CATCH** THAT MAN!

JUST A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS, MAN! WHAT **REALLY** HAPPENED TO YOUR SISTER? WAS SHE **REALLY SICK?**

I DON'T GET IT, SAM!
LAUREN'S BEEN DEAD FOR
THREE DAYS NOW...AND
YOU STILL WON'T TELL ME
WHAT **HAPPENED** TO HER!



SHE NEVER HAD
A SICK DAY IN HER
LIFE, SAM! WHY
DID SHE **DIE?**

STILL, THE
AUTOPSY SHOWED
THAT SHE DIED
OF...

...**ACUTE
ANEMIA!**

ALL RIGHT, YOU
DESERVE TO KNOW
THE **TRUTH**...SO I'LL
TELL YOU, EVEN THOUGH
IT DOESN'T MAKE
ANY **SENSE!**

SHE HAD A CHECKUP A
MONTH AGO AND WAS **FINE!**
SHE WAS THE PICTURE
OF **HEALTH!**

AND WITH HER **ARRIVAL,**
WE WILL BE READY FOR
THE MOMENT WE HAVE
SO LONG **AWAITED!**

THIS IS THE
THIRD NIGHT,
WOMEN OF MY LIFE!
YOU KNOW BY NOW
THE **SIGNIFICANCE**
OF THAT!

IN JUST TWO
MORE MINUTES,
WE WILL BE
JOINED BY
ANOTHER
FOLLOWER!

SHORTLY AFTER SHE
WALKS THROUGH THE
DOORWAY... WE SHALL
NEVER **HUNGER** AGAIN!

NOW, THE MOMENT
OF RECKONING IS
UPON US! WITH THE
ADDITION OF ONE
FINAL **FOLLOWER...**

WELCOME, LAUREN!
WELCOME TO LIFE
THAT WILL
NEVER **END!**

YOU
CALLED ME,
MASTER, AS
YOU
PROMISED
...AND I HAVE
COME!

...OUR
DESTINY SHALL
AT LAST BE
FULFILLED!

CREEAKK



SO IF YOU'RE SO CERTAIN THAT **DEREK** HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH LAUREN'S DEATH... WHY DON'T YOU HAVE HIM **ARRESTED**?

BUT YOU'RE A **POLICEMAN**! SURELY THEY'D TRUST YOUR **INTUITION**!

OH, GEE WHIZ, I'M **SORRY, SAM!** I'M BEING **NAIVE**!

...BUT I HAVE **ANOTHER** IDEA! WHAT IF I TRY TO GET SOME **INFORMATION** FOR YOU?! WHAT IF I TRY TO **DATE** THIS **DEREK** CHARACTER ?!

BECAUSE I HAVE **NO PROOF**! THEY'D LAUGH ME OUT OF THE **PRECINCT**!



UNLESS YOU THINK MAYBE I'M NOT SEXY ENOUGH TO **ATTRACT** HIM!

I'LL **ACCEPT** THAT, SAM! BUT WHAT DO YOU SAY WE **FORGET** IT FOR NOW?

YOU'RE WORKING TOMORROW NIGHT, SO I'LL GO DOWN TO THE PLACE WHERE **LAUREN** MET HIM AND SEE WHAT'S **HAPPENING**!

MAYBE I CAN **LEARN** SOMETHING ABOUT HIM...AND WITH THAT SETTLED, MAYBE NOW YOU CAN **CONCENTRATE** ON **LEARNING** SOMETHING ABOUT ME!

YOU **KNOW** BETTER THAN THAT! BUT I COULDN'T LET YOU TAKE THE **RISK**!

BESIDES, I'M PROBABLY JUST BEING **RIDICULOUS** ABOUT THE WHOLE THING, EVEN THOUGH I CAN'T HELP FEELING THERE'S SOMETHING **TERRIBLY EVIL** ABOUT THAT MAN!



NOW...ALL OF YOU KNOW WHAT MUST BE DONE...AND **WHY**! SO GO FORWARD WITH MY **BLESSING**!

...AND DO AS YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD FOR THE **GOOD** OF OUR **FAMILY**!



IF YOU DO YOUR **TASK WELL** YOU WILL BE REWARDED WITH **LIFE EVER-LASTING**!

SO THINK NOT OF **WHAT** YOU MUST DO, BUT OF THE **END** RESULT IT WILL **BRING** YOU!

GO! AND DO NOT DARE RETURN TO ME **EMPTYHANDED**!



IT IS DONE!
NOW BRING IN
THE NECESSARY
EQUIPMENT!



WHAT DO YOU *THINK* OF IT, SAM? THE *MURDERS*, I MEAN!

HARD TO FIGURE, FLASH! DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY *MOTIVE*! I MEAN, NOTHING WAS *STOLEN* OR ANYTHING!

WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO *BUTCHER* TWO COUPLES LIKE THAT FOR *NOTHING*?! COULD BE A *POLITICAL MOTIVE*!

WELL, GOOD LUCK ON IT, SAM! AND HERE'S A PICTURE TOOK AT LAUREN'S *FUNERAL*!

I SHOT IT WHILE YOU WERE *CHASING* THAT GUY! THOUGHT YOU MIGHT *WANT* IT!

IT'S AMAZING! THE PUBLIC DOESN'T *KNOW* IT, BUT ALL FOUR OF THOSE PEOPLE WERE SUFFERING FROM *ACUTE ANEMIA*... JUST LIKE LAUREN!

PROBABLY JUST A CRAZY *COINCIDENCE*, BUT I CAN'T HELP WONDERING IF MAYBE THERE'S A *CONNECTION*!

THANKS, FLASH...AND HANG IN THERE, BUDDY!



MY GOD! IT ISN'T *POSSIBLE*!



HE WAS *THERE*! I WAS RUNNING *AFTER* HIM... BUT HE DOESN'T SHOW UP IN THE *PICTURE*!

IT'S TOO *INSANE* TO BE *REAL*, YET I'M LOOKING AT THE *PROOF*!



AND SANDY WAS GOING TO TRY TO *GO OUT* WITH HIM TONIGHT!

IS THAT *CAMPING EQUIPMENT* STILL DOWN IN *ORDINANCE*?

YEAH, SAM! WHAT'S UP?

NEVER MIND!



I MUST BE
LOSING MY **MIND!**
STILL, I CAN'T
TAKE THE **CHANCE!**

I'VE ALREADY LOST
LAUREN AND I CAN'T
AFFORD TO RISK
LOSING **SANDY**
AS WELL!

THINGS LIKE THIS
AREN'T **POSSIBLE!**
THEY ONLY HAPPEN
IN **BOOKS!**

STILL, THE
EVIDENCE **ADDS**
UP! HE DID IT TO
LAUREN, AND HE DID
IT TO THE **SENATORS**
AND THEIR WIVES!



THAT HAS
TO BE THE
ANSWER! MAD
AS IT SEEMS
I CAN'T
BELIEVE
ANYTHING
ELSE!



YOU KNOW, BABY, I'M
REALLY DIGGING THE
FACT THAT I **GOT**
TOGETHER WITH
YOU TONIGHT!

YOU'RE A GROOVY
CHICK, AND I THINK
WE CAN **MAKE IT**, IF
YOU KNOW WHAT
I MEAN!

I **FOLLOW** YOU,
DEREK, BUT I'D LIKE
TO KNOW MORE
ABOUT YOU!



LATER, BABY,
LATER! RIGHT NOW
THERE'S JUST YOU
AND ME!

THIS IS A
HAPPENING FOR
BOTH OF US!

THEN WE CAN GET
ON TO THE **HEAVY**
THINGS LATER! **DIG?**

I... I **DIG**,
DEREK!



DEREK WILLIAMSON? SURE,
HE SPLIT FROM HERE A FEW
MINUTES AGO WITH A
CHICK!

WELL, WHAT
DID SHE **LOOK**
LIKE, MAN?

MAN, HE
DIDN'T SEEM
LIKE **MOST** OF
THE OTHERS!

A FINE **FOX**, DADDY!
NEVER SAW HER
AROUND HERE BEFORE,
BUT THEN **DEREK** ALWAYS
GETS **ALL** OF THE
NEW STUFF!

YEAH, HE WAS
REALLY **UPTIGHT!**
I COULD ALMOST
DIG THE MAN...

...IF HE WASN'T ONE OF
THEM! NOW COME ON AND LETS
GET BACK TO THE **ACTION!** YOU
THINK HE'D STAND AROUND ON
THE SIDEWALK WORRYING ABOUT
US IF SOMEBODY'D MADE OFF
WITH OUR OLD LADY?





I...I'LL DO WHAT-
EVER YOU **SAY**,
DEREK!

I KNOW,
I KNOW!

I GOT YOUR
NUMBER, DEREK!
I STILL DON'T
BELIEVE IT,
BUT IT SEEMS
TO BE
HAPPENING
ANYWAY!

YOU KILLED
MY **SISTER**...AND
NOW YOU WERE
ABOUT TO DO
THE **SAME** TO
MY **FIANCE**!



NOTHING
CAN **STOP**
US NOW!

IN A FEW
MOMENTS, YOU
WILL BE MINE
FOREVER!

YES, DEREK...
FOREVER!



NO!
NOOOOO!
TAKE IT
AWAY! I
BEG OF YOU!
TAKE IT
AWAY!



NOW...
YOU'RE GOING
TO **DIE**...

BUT IN AN AGE
WHEN NO ONE
BELIEVES IN OLD
SUPERSTITIONS ANY-
MORE...YOU'VE MADE
A **BELIEVER** OF ME!

NOOOOO!

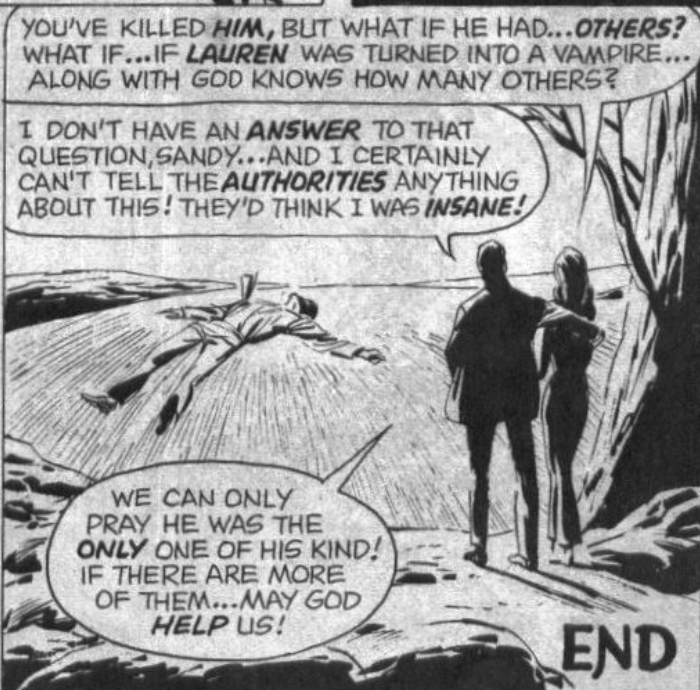
**DIE...DIE...
DIE...DIE...**



IT'S ALL OVER,
DARLING! IT SEEMS
LIKE A NIGHTMARE,
BUT WE BOTH KNOW
IT WAS **REAL**!

BUT ALL THAT
MATTERS IS
THAT IT HAS
ENDED!

HAS IT,
SAM? I'M SO
FRIGHTENED!



YOU'VE KILLED **HIM**, BUT WHAT IF HE HAD...**OTHERS**?
WHAT IF...IF **LAUREN** WAS TURNED INTO A VAMPIRE...
ALONG WITH GOD KNOWS HOW MANY **OTHERS**?

I DON'T HAVE AN **ANSWER** TO THAT
QUESTION, SANDY...AND I CERTAINLY
CAN'T TELL THE **AUTHORITIES** ANYTHING
ABOUT THIS! THEY'D THINK I WAS **INSANE**!

WE CAN ONLY
PRAY HE WAS THE
ONLY ONE OF HIS KIND!
IF THERE ARE MORE
OF THEM...MAY GOD
HELP US!

END

IN A COLD STONE TOWER OF HIS TOWN HOME IN RENAISSANCE FLORENCE-- CRISTOFORO ORSINO PERFORMS A DEMONIAL INVOCATION--HOPING IN HIS DESPAIR TO BRING THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS, THAT LEGENDARY LORD OF TARTARUS, OUT OF THOSE HELLFIRES WHICH ARE HIS FIERY HOME! FOR CRISTOFORO ORSINO HAS NEED OF THE GENTLEMAN FROM GENENNA! IF THE DEVIL CANNOT HELP HIM--HE WILL BECOME A VICTIM OF HIS HALF-MAD RULER! YET IF HE DOES AS THE DEVIL BIDS, HE WILL FALL VICTIM TO HIS OWN HATE!

The Horror on the Chapel Wall



ASMODEUS!
YOU WHO BEAR
THE NAME OF
DEVIL AND
BEELZEBUD!

HEAR MY
PRAYERS!

DEMON
FROM THE FIRES
OF GEHENNA...

COME
TO ME!

SOMETHING IN THE SHADOWS--STIRS--
BREATHES HARSHLY! FIRE AND BRIMSTONE
TAINTS THE MUSTY AIR...

I AM--ASMODEUS.
I HEARD YOUR CRY
IN HELL--AND HAVE
TRAVELED ACROSS
TIME AND SPACE...

WHAT SEEK
YOU, CRISTOFORO
ORSINO?

I SEEK
VENGEANCE
ON MY DUKE!
ONLY YESTERDAY--
WHAT'S THAT?

NOCK NOCK

A THUNDEROUS KNOCKING SHAKE THE VERY WALLS OF THE PIAZZA DROWNING OUT THE YOUTHFUL ARTIST'S WORDS...

LOW LAUGHTER FILLS THE NECROMANTIC CHAMBER...



TOO LATE! THOSE WILL BE THE DUKE'S MEN COME FOR ME!



FEAR NOT, CRISTOFORO! WHERE THE DEVIL GOES, NONE ELSE CAN MOVE EXCEPT AT HIS CONSENT.

WHAT IS IT YOU WANT OF ME?



IF THEY BREAK IN, THE DUKE WILL HAVE ME BURNED AS A DEVIL WORSHIPPER!

WHICH YOU ARE, IT SEEMS! BUT NEVER MIND THAT. YOU ARE UNDER MY PROTECTION. NONE WILL BREAK IN...UNTIL YOU WANT THEM TO.

SO SPEAK!

UNTIL YESTERDAY, I WAS THE HAPPIEST MAN IN ALL FLORENCE! I WAS IN LOVE WITH ISABELLA CONTRADINO--AND SHE WITH ME!

AND THEN IN MY GARDEN, THE DUKE SAW ISABELLA! HE HAS SPIRITED HER AWAY!



HIS VOICE SHAKES WITH THE HATE INSIDE HIM AS CRISTOFORO ORSINO STRETCHES OUT A BESEECHING HAND...

THE DUKE SENT HIS MEN TO TAKE HER TO HIS PALACE!

I SEEK VENGEANCE ON HIM! GIVE ME VENGEANCE--

AND TAKE MY SOUL IN PAYMENT!



IF I GRANT YOU YOUR VENGEANCE-- IT MAY COST YOU YOUR LIFE!

THEN TAKE MY LIFE ALONG WITH MY SOUL, DARK ONE!

ONLY GIVE ME WHAT I ASK!



NEXT MOMENT, IN A BURST OF FLAME AND SMOKE, THE NOBGOB VANISHES FROM VIEW...



NEXT MOMENT THE STREET DOOR CRASHES FROM ITS HINGES...



STRONG HANDS GRIP THE WRISTS OF THE YOUTHFUL ARTIST...



THE POUNDING HOOVES OF GALLOPING HORSES AND THE RATTLING WHEELS OF A BLACK COACH SHOW WHERE ONE MORE VICTIM OF THE HALF-MAD DUKE IS BEING CARRIED TO FACE A DREADFUL DOOM...



GRIM DUKE LEOPOLD AWAITS THE MAN HE HATES...



A HAND THROWS OPEN THE DOOR TO AN UPSTAIRS BEDROOM...

LOOK THERE, CRISTOFORO ORSINO-- AND THEN TELL ME I SHOULD NOT HAVE YOU TORTURED TO DEATH!

LOOK, MAN-- LOOK!

ISABELLA!!

YOU DID THIS! YOU MURDERED THE WOMAN I LOVE!

FOR THIS, I WILL HAVE VENGEANCE!

FOOL! SHE STABBED HERSELF... MEWLING OUT THAT SHE LOVED ONLY YOU AND WOULD HAVE NONE BUT YOU TOUCH HER!

SHE ALSO SAID--BEFORE SHE STABBED HERSELF --THAT SHE WOULD WAIT FOR YOU BEYOND THE GRAVE!

I AM A SENSITIVE MAN, ORSINO. I HATE YOU-- BUT MY HATE MUST NOT DICTATE MY DUCAL FEELINGS.

I WANT TO REUNITE YOU AND YOUR LOVING ISABELLA IN DEATH. BUT...I CANNOT CONDEMN YOU TO DEATH UNLESS YOU COMMIT A CRIME!

SO I HAVE DECIDED TO GIVE YOU A TASK THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PERFORM! BY FAILING TO DO WHAT YOUR DUKE HAS ORDERED--

YOU SHALL SIGN YOUR OWN DEATH WARRANT!

IN A BARE CHAPEL IN THE DUCAL PALACE, MINUTES LATER...

YOU SHALL COVER THESE WALLS WITH HOLY SCENES... BEFORE DAWN LIGHT!

SUCCEED-- AND WALK OUT OF HERE A FREE MAN!

FAIL! AND YOU DIE BY TORTURE!

CRISTOFORO ORSINO FACES AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK, INDEED!

LEFT ALONE--DESPAIRING AND BEYOND HOPE--
THE YOUNG ARTIST BEGINS HIS TITANIC TASK...

THE LIGHT IS BAD...THE PAINTS ARE WATERY,
WHICH MEANS THEY KEEP RUNNING!

I CAN NEVER
GET THIS PAINTING
DONE.

BUT THEN THE DUKE
KNEW THIS WHEN HE
ASSIGNED THE TASK
TO ME!



AND THEN AT THE WITCHING HOUR OF MIDNIGHT...

BE CHEERFUL, CRISTOFORO!
DID I NOT **PROMISE** TO
HELP YOU GAIN YOUR
VENGEANCE?

GIVE OVER TO
MY ARTISTIC
SKILLS, NOW.



NOW BEGINS A NIGHT OF MINGLED HORROR AND
PRIMAL TERROR FOR CRISTOFORO ORSINI!...

THAT IS NO
HOLY SCENE
WE DRAW!

INDEED
NOT!

WHAT HAVE
I TO DO WITH
HOLY THINGS?



I DRAW THE FORGOTTEN DAYS WHEN EARTH WAS
YOUNG, WHEN PEOPLE WORSHIPPED ME AS **PAN**...
AS **DIONYSUS**...AS **APIS** OF EGYPT! HERE THERE
WAS LOVE AND LAUGHTER, DAY AND NIGHT...

HERE, LET ME
PAINT **ISABELLA** INTO
MY PICTURE!



HIS SOUL FILLED WITH HORROR, YOUNG ORSINO DRAWS BACK...

MY
BELOVED!

SHALL I PAINT
YOU IN ALSO,
CRISTOFORO?
BEHOLD, THEN!



WHAT **ELSE** ARE YOU
PUTTING IN THE PICTURE?

WHAT IS THAT
MONSTROUS--
SOMETHING--HALF
HIDDEN IN THE
LEAVES AND
SHADOWS?





WHY, THAT IS THE GREAT DEMON WHO BEARS MANY NAMES!

IN INDIA, HE IS MAHESA! IN ANCIENT EGYPT, HE WAS SETH!

HE IS MY IMP, THAT-WHICH-SHOULD-NEVER-HAVE-BEEN-BORN!

IT'S HORRIBLE!

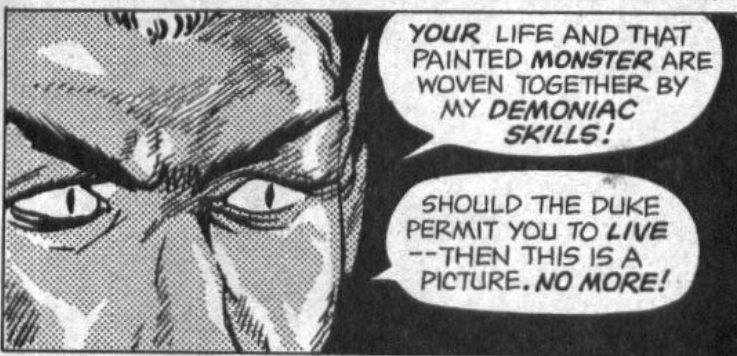


FEAR NOT. IT'S ONLY A PAINTING.

IT CAN NEVER COME TO LIFE UNLESS--

--YOU DIE!

WHAT DO... YOU MEAN?



YOUR LIFE AND THAT PAINTED MONSTER ARE WOVEN TOGETHER BY MY DEMONIAK SKILLS!

SHOULD THE DUKE PERMIT YOU TO LIVE --THEN THIS IS A PICTURE. NO MORE!



BUT SHOULD THE DUKE IN AN EXCESS OF HOLY ZEAL FEEL CALLED UPON TO SLAY YOU--

THEN YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR VENGEANCE IN FULL, CRISTOFORO ORSINO!

ASMODEUS FADES FROM VIEW... AND THEN, WHEN THE FIRST RED SHAFTS OF MORNING SUNLIGHT TINT THE CHAPEL WINDOWS...

HA! I'M RIGHT ON TIME YOU SEE.

I'M NOT GIVING YOU ONE MORE SECOND IN WHICH TO FINISH...

WHAT'S THIS?

LEOPOLD STARES AT THE PAINTED PICTURE OF THE GARDEN OF HORRORS.

YOU PERFORMED THE TASK I SET YOU!

BUT INSTEAD OF HOLY PICTURES ...I SEE EVIL CACODAEMONS-- WITCHES--HIDEOUS MONSTERS!

AS THOUGH-- THE DEVIL HIMSELF HAD PAINTED A LANDSCAPE OUT OF HIS FIERY HELL!

OUT HIM IN CHAINS FOR THE DAY--AND LET HIM THINK ON WHAT IT MEANS TO DISOBEY HIS DUKE!

THEN AT THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT--OFF WITH HIS HEAD!



AT MIDNIGHT--IN
THE COLD STONE
DUNGEONS...



AT MIDNIGHT--IN THE PAINTED CHAPEL.



ON DEMONIC FEET THE AWESOME
SOMETHING STEPS ACROSS THE
CHAPEL FLOOR...



A FEARSOME BUFFET BENDS THE WOODEN DOOR...



IN HIS LOFTY TOWER DOOR, DUKE
LEOPOLD HEARS A STRANGE AND
EERIE SNIFFING...



SNUFFLE
SNUFFLE

DIO MIO!
WHAT'S THAT?
I SENSE SOME--
SOME AWFUL
CREATURE--
HUNGERING FOR
MY LIFE'S
BLOOD!



AHH **No!**

TIS SOME
FIEND OF DARK
HADES!

THE DOOR POUNDS--CRASHES;
SOULFULLY MOANS AND FALLS
INWARD! ACROSS THE FLOOR
LEAPS AN UNFORGETTABLE
ABOMINATION...



THE DUKE DROPS--WHILE GAPING
MOUTHS DRIVE FOR HIS THROAT...

OH, MY GOD!
YOU!



IN THAT LAST
MOMENT--
BEFORE
RAPACIOUS
FANGS FLASH
INTO HIS
THROAT, DUKE
LEOPOLD
SEES...



CRISTOFORO
ORSINO'S
EYES!!

MORNING SUNLIGHT CASTS ITS
OCHRE BRUSH...

BUT AT EVERY
MIDNIGHT--ON THE
DUSTY CHAPEL WALL
THE MONSTER FEASTS
AGAIN--AND AGAIN--
AND **AGAIN!** AND
ALWAYS AT THAT
DREAD HOUR, THE
SHRIEKS OF THE
EATEN-ALIVE DUKE
LEOPOLD ONCE MORE
RING THROUGHOUT
HIS LONG-ABANDONED
PALACE...

SEBAG
MOREN

The ?
END.